

REMARKS

This application is amended in a manner believed to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Claim 3 is amended. Support may be found, for example, at page 8, lines 10-14, page 9, lines 5-10 and Figure 2.

Claims 3, 5 and 6 remain pending in present application.

Claims 3, 5, and 6 were rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons that follow.

The position of the Official Action was that the baking limitation does not recite the features disclosed at page 8, lines 10-13 of the present specification.

However, the claim is amended to recite that the baking step is in the context of a post-treatment step after the chromium film has been deposited by wet plating.

Thus, the claims comply with the written description requirement, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 5, and 6 were rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the enablement requirement. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons that follow.

The position of the Official Action is that the baking step is not described in the specification.

The baking step is used when a wet-type plating method is used, before a heat treatment, to vaporize the moisture on the plate. Applicants believe that one of ordinary skill in the art of semiconductors would have understood this function of the baking step, as the baking step is disclosed as being utilized when a wet-type plating method is used and with a high-purity inert gas atmosphere having a concentration of moisture of no more than 10 ppm. Although a specific time is not disclosed in the specification, one of ordinary skill in the art would have understood that the step should be carried out until the moisture is sufficiently vaporized.

As to the particular inert gases, inert gases commonly used in the semiconductor field are used, as oxidation of chromium is to be prevented during baking. Applicants believe that one of ordinary skill in the art of semiconductors would have understood the type of inert gases for use in such a step.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 5, and 6 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons that follow.

The Official Action objects to "chromium-oxide" as being unclear. Accordingly, claim 3 is amended to recite a film

consisting of Cr₂O₃, which is consistent with the elemental concentration shown in Figure 2, i.e., about 60% oxygen and about 40% chromium, for the "chromium oxide passivation film of substantially 100%", "which is approximately 30 nm from the outermost surface", as described at page 9, lines 5-10.

Therefore, the claims are definite, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the amendment to the claims and the foregoing remarks, applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action. Allowance and passage to issue on that basis is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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